the last year. The model price of chilly from April, 2007 to July, 2007 vary between Rs. 3400/- to Rs. 3800/- per quintal as against Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 3400/- from April to July, 2006. Though prevailing market prices of chillies are not so attractive but farmers are getting remunerative prices at present, considering the cost of production of the crop which is estimated to be around Rs. 2050/- per quintal.

(b) The maximum price of chilly was noticed to Rs. 7500/- per quintal in Khammam market during the month of January, 2007 which went down to the level of Rs. 5750/- per quintal during the month of May, 2007. But fluctuation in average price was only in the range of Rs. 5375/- to Rs. 3650/- per quintal. The chilly prices vary depending upon the quality and demand and generally the last picking lack quality and get lower price.

(c) The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken following steps to help the chilly farmers:

Pre Harvest Practices

- Creating awareness on the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for reducing the cost of production and improving the quality.

Post Harvest Practices

- Poly sheets for drying are encouraged to avoid the development of aflatoxins and contamination with extraneous matter which is the major problem in chillies.
- 1,15,237 no. of poly sheets were supplied with 33.3% assistance from 1996 to 2006.
- Walk-in type-solar driers are provided with 50% assistance for effective drying in short span in potential districts.
- Trainings and extension services are being provided for dissemination of the technology for quality improvement.

Promotion of organic fertilizers

605. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to promote organic fertilizers by giving subsidy and also market facilities; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Government is implementing a Central Sector Scheme, "National Project on Organic Farming" wherein subsidy for setting up of organic input production units @ 25% of the project cost up to a maximum of Rs. 40.00 lakh per unit for fruit and vegetable waste compost units, Rs. 20.00 lakh per unit for bio-fertilizer production units and Rs.1.50 lakh per unit for Vermiculture hatcheries is being provided as credit linked back ended subsidy through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and National Co-operative Development Council (NCDC). Market Development is one of the components under

this project which include studies on market assessment and consumer behaviour, product processing, evaluation of market potential, publicity using electronic and print media for creating consumer awareness and organization of exhibitions/ seminars.

Government is also implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "National Horticulture Mission" under which funds are provided for setting up of vermi-compost units @ 50% of the cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 30,000/- per beneficiary.

(b) Does not arise.

PM's scheme for development of agriculture sector

†606. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the month of May, 2007 the Prime Minister had announced a scheme of rupees 25,000 crores for expenditure under a new system for the development of agriculture sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any effective action plan has also been formulated in order to utilize the above mentioned amount; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The National Development Council's resolution dated the 29th May, 2007 has identified the need for introducing a new Additional Central Assistance scheme to be administered by the Ministry of Agriculture to incentivize the States to draw up plans for their agriculture sector more comprehensively. The scheme is being formulated.

Rain based farming

†607. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of agricultural land dependent on rains in the country;

(b) whether some concrete effort is being made by his Ministry to encourage rain-based dry farming in the State of Uttarakhand; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Out of 328.7 million hectare of geographical area of the country,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.